SUGGESTIONS

ON THE

SLAVE TRADE,

FOR THE

CONSIDERATION

OF THE

LEGISLATURE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

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SLAVE TRADE,

&c.

WHATEVER the diſappointment may have been of thoſe very worthy characters, who, for years back, with a laudable, unwearied, and an unexampled zealouſneſs, endeavoured to procure what is underſtood by the word *freedom*, that ſomething oppoſite to ſlavery, for the negroes in our colonies, which they fear is more remote than they had reaſon to expect from an early reſolution of the Houſe of Commons, they muſt, notwithſtanding the temporary defeat of their plan, feel the conſolation of having diſcharged a duty, in their conception, juſtly due to themſelves and to mankind.

To thoſe very honourable men who oppoſed the abolition of the ſlave trade, I have to acknowledge that much may be ſaid in ſupport of their ideas, ſo far as they went to prevent the immediate, unqualified abolition of the trade; as well on grounds of juſtice to the planter, as of humanity to the unfortunate *Africans*; and as it appears to me, with all due deference, that immediate abolition, without a ſubſtitution of ſervices, if we are to conſider the iſlands of conſequence to the mother country and of right to their proprietors, would be as unreaſonable, as the uſual continued ſlavery with its cruel and irrational concomitant attendants, is degrading to humanity; therefore I pray the kind indulgence of my readers; for when I conſider the great pains which have been taken, and the unprecedented reſearches which have been made for years back to bring this very important matter fairly before the public, by wiſe and good men, I feel that deficiency, which, when truly conceived, muſt render me the leſs capable of committing my thoughts to paper on a ſubject of ſuch magnitude, comprehending juſtice in its mercy; the more particularly as it is impoſſible, under the preſent jarring opinions, not to differ from ſome perſons which my humanity (if any I poſſeſs) prompts me to love and eſteem, and from others, for whoſe general opinions I have due reverence, and whoſe goodneſs of heart I can bear teſtimony to: But as I have reaſon

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to know that the cruelties moſt undeſervedly and ſacrilegiouſly inflicted on the doomed wretches, from their captivity, or ſentences until their deaths, were the firſt motives for applying for the abolition; and as the apprehenſion of loſing colonial property now, and hereafter, induced others to oppoſe it; my effort, with as much brevity as I am capable of, ſhall be (with great deference to the pains-taking and learned on the ſubject), to throw out ſuch rude outlines as they, in their wiſdom, may reject or improve on.

I pray that thoſe who wiſh for the trade's abolition may not ſuppoſe me guilty of ſupporting its protraction, or connect me with thoſe perſons whoſe reaſons for its continuance are, that it is mediately interwoven with our national and commercial intereſts, and immediately with thoſe of the planters: as to its operation on the latter, that may deſerve ſome conſideration; and I hope it will appear, by my ſuggeſtions, that I have not loſt ſight of their intereſts; but if, by the privation of happineſs, comfort, and every principle of ſocial order and feeling humanity, we are only for a ſingle hour to continue a traffic (by preſcribing a few palliatives) which ſhould never have been began, big with inexpiable cruelty, cunning, and diſgrace, leſt the planters ſhould ſuffer, we ſhall not have to boaſt of that diſintereſtedneſs which has ever been the pride of Britain:

tain: hence it is, that I wiſh to ſteer the middle way—holding forward the means of cultivation, but connecting the labourer's intereſts, his happineſs, and his actual protection, with the planter's profits.

Not being accuſtomed to remonſtrate with great and awful aſſemblies, I hope the intention of being uſeful by introducing my mite, will plead the beſt excuſe for want of local information and defect of uſual method; for I fear my exertions in this, as in other caſes, from the novelty and peculiarity of my mode, may in ſome meaſure defeat its intentions.

I beg to commence, without further apology, with a few poſitions—viz. that the Weſt Indian iſlands are, or are not, of conſequence to the ſtate and to their domeſtic or abſent proprietors; if the former, that muſt bear an adequate proportion to their culture and produce: if they are to be cultivated—quere, by whom? whether by thoſe whoſe conſtitutions are more congenial to the climate, ſurcharged atmoſphere, and ſoil, and who are gratified with the innoxious productive colonial diet—or by others, to whom the former are baneful, and the latter would not prove ſatisfying? From theſe poſitions may be deduced what, with unaffected diffidence, I hold as reaſonable and humane—firſt, that ſo long as we

we retain theſe colonies, their value muſt bear proportion to their produce, which ſhould be obtained by means the leaſt objectionable in a humane ſenſe, worthy a great people and an enlightened age: for I pray it may be underſtood, that the *African* is not leſs dear to me than the *European*, and that the ſole reaſon I have for cultivating the plantations by him, rather than by the latter, is, that the climate is in every ſenſe to him more congenial; that nature has provided him with that peculiarity of ſkin, and inceſſant *oleous tranſudation* connected with tranſpirable matter, calculated to reſiſt the ſcorching rays of the ſun, and cuſtom has led him to live principally on diet of the vegetable and farinaceous kinds, affording food ſufficiently nutritious, reſiſting putrefaction, and corrective of bilious and malignant acrimonies: therefore I am to ſuppoſe, even on the ground of humanity, that by *Africans* born, or Creoles, the culture ſhould principally be carried on. But the great and deſirable matter is, to have that done in ſuch manner as to prevent, in as much as poſſible, the cruelties complained of; to render the ſtate of the human being rather a matter deſirable than dreadful; to hold in view the day of freedom for him and his poſterity, with the well-founded expectation, on that day, of enjoying common intereſts with others of the ſtate; all which muſt induce his love for the ſoil, its culture, and defence; for, from

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my own knowledge, with boldneſs I can ſtate, ſuſceptibility, conception, and reaſon, not to be incompatible with thoſe even of the Torrid Zone; nor has the microſcopic eye of the moſt accurate anatomiſt been able to diſtinguiſh a more perfect ſtructure or arrangement to conſtitute quickneſs of perception and the powers of judgment in the brain or nervous filaments of the white, than in thoſe of the black or mulatto; but to harbour the idea (for a ſingle moment) of its being proper to continue the growth of early-created luxuries, by uſage made neceſſaries, to gratify and enrich ſome, at the everlaſting expenſe of others (I may truly ſay of innocents), would be to demand a debt unjuſtly due, and mercileſſly to extort it;—by allotting the ſweet as the portion of the *epicure*, the bitter that of the *doomed* ſlave—extravagant preſumption!

I by no means come forward to ſupport all the charges of cruelty, inconſideration, and falſe policy, made againſt thoſe concerned either in the purchaſe in Africa, in harbours, on the paſſage, or in the plantations; as, admitting but *one-tenth* of them to be true, humanity cries aloud for their abolition; but as it muſt be admitted by the very advocates for the trade, that many of theſe outrages have been inflicted on theſe unfortunate people, humanity muſt rejoice at finding that, conſiſtent with the advantages of the colonies, a de-

gree of happineſs, when compared with their hitherto wretchedneſs, may be effected; which is the great and deſirable object of thoſe who ſeek the trade's abolition.

So much has been ſaid on the firſt motives and mode of carrying on wars on the *ſlave-producing continent*; of the artifices and execrable practices uſed in the obtaining of thouſands of thoſe doomed wretches, and ſo many (perhaps ſome well-founded) defences ſet up in oppoſition to theſe charges, that the human mind muſt rather wiſh the latter to be true than to ſuppoſe, for a moment, that any man, or body of men, could be found (be their falſely-ſuppoſed intereſts ever ſo great), who would wiſh to continue inſtrumental to the deſtruction and extinction of thoſe neceſſary ſenſations founded in true charity, *the love for one another*. Juſtice poſitively directs us not to do another the injury we would not chooſe he ſhould do unto us: but charity directs more, viz. to do that good to others, we would wiſh they ſhould do, to us.

The principal matters which I beg to mention as the ground-work of my plan, are comprehended under the following heads: thoſe practicable in this kingdom to be executed, by the direction, or under the inſpection of a fit and proper officer, or officers, to be ſpecially appointed by his Moſt Gracious Majeſty for that purpoſe.

1ſt. The permitting only ſhips of certain dimenſions and qualifications to be employed in the trade; and that theſe ſhips, when ſo approved by the proper officer, ſhould be fitted up on the principle of health and convenience (however, connecting therewith the neceſſary ſecurity), and ſuited to their exact purpoſes, for which they ſhould be regiſtered and entered.

2dly. That not only the veſſels tonnage ſhould be ſtated, but the *aërial ſpace* intended to be occupied by the Africans (this being the true line to be governed by), as ſome ſhips of *two* or *three hundred tons* have loftier decks, conſequently poſſeſs more habitable ſpace than ſhips of *four* or *five hundred tons*, independent of the advantages of extending their limbs, and having, in the lofty decked ſhips, their own foul exhalations out of the reach of their breathing.

3dly. A ſketch of the ſhip's decks ſhould be provided and annexed to the ſhip's regiſter at the port from whence ſhe takes her departure, ſpecifying the quantity of aërial ſpace within each diviſion, or apartment, intended for the carrying of Africans; more than which ſhould not be taken in, however rateable according to their ſizes; nor ſhould the maſter of the veſſel, nor any other perſon concerned, under the penalty of a ſpecified fine, or impriſonment, preſume to narrow, alter, or otherwiſe

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change, thoſe allotted *ſlave apartments*, calculated for the ſpecific numbers, as firſt ſtated, other than by removing the partitions, or bulk-heads, to add to their better accommodation, or opening ſpaces for the better ſupplying them with air; nor ſhould it be permitted for the maſter, or other perſon, directly or indirectly, to apply any part, or parts, of the allotted ſpaces alluded to for any other purpoſe than the accommodation of the number of perſons intended for each, other than that, in caſe of ſickneſs, it may become neceſſary for the ſurgeon to leſſen the number of thoſe in the diſeaſed apartment, or otherwiſe render it, or a part of it, commodious for the diſeaſed: but the true intent and meaning of the law ſhould be, that not one inch of the original allotted ſpace ſhall be withheld from the rateable number of Africans, allowing to each perſon of — ſize or ſtature, — cubical feet of aërial ſpace.

4thly. The proviſions, as well thoſe intended for the Africans, as for the crew, ſhould be ſubject to the inſpection of the proper board, or officer, previous to the ſhip's leaving this kingdom; and any matter not being *ſound, well ſaved*, or ſuited for ſuch intended purpoſe, and the length of the voyage, ſhould be forthwith, if on board, removed from the ſhip; and ſuch officer ſhould have power to inſpect all ſuch intended proviſions before they are embarked, in order that he may counſel and

adviſe with the perſons concerned in ſuch ſupply of victualling, to prohibit, if neceſſary, the ſending of improper proviſions, or retaining or ſending bad water on board: this, if ſcrupulouſly and candidly executed, will prevent the (perhaps juſt) cauſes of complaint ſo frequently made by the crews of ſhips employed in the ſlave trade.

5thly and laſtly. In reſpect to what ſhould be done previous to the ſhip's ſailing for *Africa* from any port within Great Britain; the directing, inſpecting, or examining officer ſo appointed ſhould have power to direct the laying in a ſuppoſed neceſſary quantity of the different matters for ventilating, and thoſe uſed with ſafety in the fumigating and cleanſing of ſhips, and preſerving and purifying water; and he ſhould alſo have power to examine and ſee that the ſurgeon was ſupplied with the probable neceſſary quantity of comforts and medicine for the diſeaſed. By thus attending to the concerns of the healthful, and to thoſe who might become diſeaſed, ſeveral of the abuſes complained of, would be fully obviated.

Next, in reſpect to *Africa*, the matters to be executed there are twofold, as are thoſe in our Weſt India colonies, viz. the one in *Africa*, ſo far as it comprehends duties and obligations, obeyable by the maſters of Britiſh ſhips, impoſed by the Britiſh legiſlature: the other, which concerns the conduct

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of the *African ſlave-merchant*, and can only be meliorated by the humane and reaſonable conſiderations of the Britiſh inſpecting officers, and by the purchaſers, maſters, and crews in the Britiſh ſhips: in like manner the Middle Paſſage treatment may be made ſubject to the Britiſh laws; but to the colonies, I believe, we are to apply (by ſuggeſting our ideas to them) for the completion of the moſt praiſeworthy, beneficent, and heavenly act of the eighteenth century.

I beg to ſuppoſe, that as well in proper ſituations on the *Gold Coaſt*, *Cape Coaſt*, &c. as in the *Gulf of Benin*, there are certain deputy officers to be ſtationed (from whom it would be delightful to have reaſon to expect an honourable diſcharge of duty) to which officer the ſhip's arrival would naturally be announced, if not within a convenient diſtance of the principal inſpector of that coaſt or diſtrict; her qualifications and capability would appear, and in how much it correſponded with the ſhip's or deck's draft annexed to the regiſter, which, if altered, would ſubject the ſhip to a certain mulct, or the maſter, or other perſons having authority in the ſhip, to certain fines or puniſhments; and if water or proviſions were to be taken in, within his (the inſpector's) diſtrict, he (the inſpector) ſhould have authority to examine into the ſame, and to adviſe againſt the introducing of any matter tainted, foul, or apparently not fit for uſe; he ſhould ſcrupulouſly

pulouſly examine and ſee that the ſhip was cleanſed and newly whitewaſhed; and that the ſpirit of the annexed general inſtructions for purifying ſhips be attended to; and that the maſters of ſhips, or purchaſers of Africans, ſhould not buy, under any pretence, or take on board, a wounded or maimed perſon; and that he ſhould not be at liberty to purchaſe, carry, or permit to be carried on board his ſhip, a part or parcel of any individual family, without purchaſing and actually bringing the whole of ſuch family (including parents and children, brothers and ſiſters) to the preciſe colony where the whole of ſuch are to be diſpoſed of, under the penalty of ſum for every ſuch offence; and he ſhould alſo, or the ſhip, be ſubject to penalty for each and every perſon above the allotted number, according to the recited regiſtry of aërial ſpace, that he had taken on board; and the local inſpecting officer ſhould tranſmit to the general inſpecting officer, or governor of the coaſt or diſtrict, an exact ſchedule of all ſuch matters or obſervations as he had made touching the ſhip's condition and cargo, from her firſt arrival, to her departure from his diſtrict; which ſchedule, docket, or certificate, ſhould become neceſſary for the *governor*, or *general inſpecting officer*'s peruſal, previous to the ſhip's taking her final departure for the colonies, from the governor or general inſpecting officer's own port or reſidence, where the ſhip and cargo ſhould undergo a further inſpection, to prevent the poſſi-

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bility of defeating the humane and truly political intentions of the legiſlature.

I beg to obſerve, that it ſhould be made obligatory on the local inſpecting officer, accurately to point out in his *ſchedule*, or *report*, to the general inſpector, the preciſe manner in which the Africans, or purchaſed perſons, were procured by the *agents*, *owners*, *maſters*, or *crews*, of the Britiſh ſhips, in order to deter any perſon concerned from exerciſing *frauds*, *deceptions*, or *cruelties*, in procuring the perſons brought on board, or intended to be conveyed, directly or indirectly, in any manner, away from the *African coaſt*; and previous to the ſhip requiring her clearance of ſailing orders from the harbour, or port, of the *general inſpecting officer* of the coaſt, or diſtrict, from whence ſhe ought to take her final departure, it ſhould be neceſſary that the maſter, mate, and ſurgeon of the ſhip (if ſuch perſons are alive, if not, the next principal perſons, according to uſual rank in the ſhip) ſhould make oath before the ſaid governor, or general inſpector (who ſhould be empowered to adminiſter the ſame), touching the truth and veracity of ſuch matters as ſhould be required of them reſpecting their general and ſpecial duties towards the Africans, from the time of their bargaining, or treating for them, or bringing them on board; which affidavit ſhould be tranſmitted to the colony to which ſuch ſhip was bound, in order to warrant the greater probability

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of its truth, as the falſehood of ſuch an oath being proved in a court of juſtice, it ſhould ſubject the perjured perſon, or perſons, to ſome exemplary fine and an ignominious puniſhment; the whole of ſuch fine ſhould be paid to the convicting party on the guilt being ſatisfactorily proved; or, in caſe of incapability to diſcharge the ſame, the judge of the court ſhould have power to increaſe the allotted puniſhment, whether by length of *confinement*, *pillory*, *corporal puniſhment*, *hard labour*, or *baniſhment to South Wales*, through the medium of Great Britain, the more to render it a matter of notoriety and heinouſneſs; and in ſuch caſe of incapability, the convicting party ſhould receive the quantity of the intended reward from the governor of the iſland where ſuch matter was tried, or from the government in Great Britain, on producing the proper certificate of the judge before whom the ſame was tried; it being the intention, in either caſe, that the gratuity ſhould be paid by Great Britain, the better, in all caſes, to induce the colonies to ſecond and enforce the ſpirit of the law without expenſe to themſelves, and to prevent their having to complain of the leaſt impoſition laid on by a Britiſh parliament.

The neglects, cruelties, impoſitions, and general breaches of the law, might be tried in the colonies, where the evidence may be beſt procured, and the puniſhments (except where the mulcts are

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ſpecified, (if they are to be ſpecified), might be left to the diſcretion of the adjudging court, provided the ſame ſhould not exceed the quantity of fines or puniſhments awarded for ſimilar crimes committed in the colony where ſuch matters might ſo happen, and be there tried.

My object being to make every poſſible proviſion for the comfort and protection of the African, as an Engliſhman I mean to confine myſelf to what may appear to be within our power, viz. the choice of ſhipping, fitting, cleanſing, fumigating, and airing them, allotting the ſhips according to their *ſlave habitable ſpaces*, conſiſtent with their ſpaciouſneſs, airineſs, and capaciouſneſs, and not according to their tonnage, which, in moſt caſes, is fallacious; for a ſhip may be low between decks although great in burden, or may be ſpacious and well ſuited to the purpoſe; but in great part, as hitherto, may be occupied by matters trafficable, or given up to accommodate the ſhip's officers, &c. The proviſions and water, as are the medicines, are made ſubject to inſpection; the means of the air, purification, &c. are eſtabliſhed; the grievous offences of *frauds*, *kidnapping*, &c. and the ſeparation of families, are prevented; and, by prohibiting the purchaſe of a wounded or maimed African, that will tend to prevent the inhuman, brutiſh treatment of the poor wretches by their captors or ſalemaſters; and the extraordinary checks and vigilance over the

conduct of all perſons concerned in the traffic,—the carrying, or of thoſe attendant on them,—it is to be hoped will be attended with conſequences as heartfelt and honourable to the enacting and concurring parties, as advantageous to the hitherto wretched ſlaves.*

To render the intended regulation and inſpection along the coaſt and in the Bithe or Gulf of Benin, reſpecting the purchaſe or engaging of the Africans, as effectual as poſſible, and creative of as little expenſe and complication as the nature of the duties to be properly diſcharged can admit of,—I beg to propoſe, that there may be *one* proper and fit perſon appointed as *Governor* or *General*

* I hope the true phi'anthropiſt will feel a real ſatisfaction in finding that good accommodation, with the other ſtated advantages, will be procured, ſhould theſe ſuggeſtions be enforced by law; but ſhould it ſo happen that thoſe who are deſirous to continue the carriers of Africans to the Weſt Indies, would rather decline the traffic, than ſubject themſelves to the preſcribed regulations; then the perſons who wiſh for the trade's abolition, by the prevention of perpetual importations, muſt be gratified; but to ſuppoſe that the apprehenſion of having ſlaves ſmuggled into the colonies ſhould prevent the enaction of laws, although juſt and reaſonable, would be at once to admit the weakneſs of the executive government, and with an humiliating ſubmiſſion to acknowledge its incapability of having that which is wiſe, humane, and proper, executed; ſhould that unfortunately be ever verified—(which nothing would more favour, than a daſtardly apprehenſion)—farewell Britiſh glory and Britiſh conſequence!

Inſpector for the line of what is underſtood by the names *Slave Coaſt*, including the *Windward Coaſt*, *Gold Coaſt*, *Sierra-Leone*, *Cape Coaſt*, &c. to be ſtationed at *Cape Coaſt Caſtle*, or ſome place of greater convenience, under whoſe direction the Deputy Inſpectors, ſtationed in the different trafficable rivers of that entire coaſt, ſhould act; and to whom the maſter of each ſhip freighted, or ſupplied with negroes, ſhould be obliged finally to reſort, to afford him (the General Inſpector) an opportunity of perſonally examining into all matters touching the regulations and arrangements enacted for the comfort and happineſs of the freight, as well comprehending the firſt fitting and apportioning the ſhip to its intended numbers, as what may reſpect its cleanlineſs and airineſs; its proviſions and water; the medical attention; the examination of ſuch ſubjects as may have been brought on board, and by what means procured; within the *harbours, rivers, or on the ſhore*; their ſtate of health, or whether by ligatures or weapons abuſed, and whether or not every poſſible means were exerciſed to come to a knowledge of, and in ſuch caſes actually to have refuſed the purchaſing or taking any part of a family without taking the whole, except that under the circumſtances of bad health or wounds, the ſame were left behind; but this ſhould be ſpecially certified under the hand and ſeal of the local inſpector, otherwiſe not to be credited. All ſuch, and every other matter as before

recited, being punctually obſerved by the maſter and other officers of the ſhip, ſhould entitle him, without *fee* or *reward*, to his letter of clearance from ſuch governor or general inſpector, for ſuch of his Majeſty's ports or colonies in the Weſt Indies as it may be agreed on that he ſhould make entry; and as it is to be underſtood, that, as well the local inſpectors, as the general inſpector, ſhould have cognizance of all and every matter before recited, it will be neceſſary that they ſhould have ſufficient knowledge of the language of the captives, to render them the more competent to diſcharge their great entruſted duties; for which reaſon there will be a neceſſity, ſhould thoſe perſons be ignorant of the languages, to have interpreters appointed for them by the *governor* or general inſpector of the diſtrict: and ſo far the probable melioration of the trade appears to be within our own power, with the admiſſion of the evidence of any captive for *cruelties*, *deceptions*, *neglects*, or *frauds*, practiſed contrary to the ſpirit of the law, againſt any perſon whomſoever, ſo long as they ſhall remain on the coaſt of *Africa*, or on their paſſage to the Weſt Indies, and until they are actually diſembarked and conſidered ſubject to the laws of the colonies; as otherwiſe the greateſt cruelties may poſſibly be exerciſed on the poor people; the more particularly ſo, as ſuppoſing an European ſailor or other perſon (whoſe evidence is admiſſible in the colonies) to threaten to ſtep forward to

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ſupport the accuſation, there are ſo many modes of getting rid of him, that, be the crime or neglect ever ſo enormous, the guilty would eſcape conviction.

I beg to obſerve that I attempt not to meddle with the modes practiſed by *Africans or Salemaſters* within their own territories; for faulty and cruel as theſe appear to be, I ſee that we cannot, in the preſent moment, remedy the errors, except by convincing them that their cruelty to the captives, by maiming or wounding them, or their uſual mode, for the convenience of the inhuman purchaſer, of dividing families, and lotting them off as beaſts of the field, will in future defeat their own market.

My idea is, that there ſhall be at leaſt one general inſpector on the Windward Coaſt; and if the reach of that coaſt ſhould appear to be too great to bear up to that inſpector's port, after taking in the cargo, there might be a ſecond, ſtationed at a proper diſtance (I ſuppoſe at *Widdah*), for the greater convenience of the trade; and another ſhould alſo be appointed for the *Bithe of Benin*, from whence ſo great a number of captives are annually brought; as by what I can underſtand from perſons who pretend to a knowledge of the coaſt, that it would not anſwer to attempt the paſſage to the Weſt Indies back by *Cape Coaſt*; but that ſtationing the general inſpector for this diſtrict on or near the

Iſland

Iſland of St. Thomas, or *Annabon* (belonging to the Portugueſe), could that be accompliſhed, it being in a tolerably favourable line of direction from the trafficable rivers in the *Gulf or Bithe of Benin*, with great eaſe and convenience every ſhip freighted in *Bonny River*, &c. might touch at this iſland on their road to their final deſtination; and I beg to obſerve on this head, that I have heard ſuch to be the convenience of this *Iſland of St. Thomas*, for the purpoſe for which I beg to propoſe it (by applying to the court of Portugal for their permiſſion) that ſome great ſlave-merchants in this country have found it moſt profitable to have certain ſtores and depots there, for the purpoſes of their trade.

Having taken leave of *Africa*, and arrived in the colonies; here commences new matter, and matter ſubject to other controul than that of the Britiſh Legiſlature; but ſenſible that humanity and conſideration are no more incompatible, on the ground of true ſenſibility, with the inhabitant of the Weſt Indies, or even the *Torrid Zone*, than with him of the North Pole, or of the moſt temperate climate; I have the ſtrongeſt hopes that on our repreſenting to the colonies, as well to their proprietors there as here, a rational ſyſtem, connecting juſtice with mercy and true policy, reſpecting the future treatment and encouragement of the hitherto ſlaves; that although, at firſt ſight, it may appear that they are about to comply with propoſals diſadvantageous

tageous to themſelves, they will, however, as true philoſophers look forward to the real acquiſitions of a future day, only to be obtained by ſupporting whatever will lay a foundation for reciprocal advantages between governors and governed—the boaſt, the ineſtimable eſſence of the Britiſh conſtitution; as from this, and this only, will ariſe profitable culture and permanent protection of the ſoil—further rewarded by doing a great and meritorious act.

It is not my intention to recite one ſingle act either of cruelty or humanity laid to the charge, or ſtated as praiſe-worthy, reſpecting the conduct of either *vender*, *factor*, *proprietor*, *overſeer*, or *ſteward*, in the colonies, or of the quantity of *labour* expected from the employed, or the attentions to their health, comprehending diet, clothing, and lodging; nor of the attention of medical men to them during diſeaſe, or that of Chriſtian miſſionaries, &c. &c. however true many of the charges may have been of ſevere and inconſiderate treatment of the poor people, as all of them muſt be more or leſs ſubject to colonial regulation and authority, it may be wiſe to remonſtrate with them on thoſe points; but, as it muſt be admitted that without ſyſtematical and equitable adminiſtration of wiſe laws in the moſt poliſhed nations, injuſtice and hardſhips would be daily practiſed, and that as in every part of the known world there are men

who

who are humane and juſt from principle, ſo there are others who merely act ſo from the fear of puniſhment, from the apprehenſion of diſgrace, or from political motives; therefore the wiſdom and prudence of penal-laws become the more neceſſary in the colonies to prevent the ill treatment of thoſe friendleſs captives, brought ſolely for colonial intereſts into thoſe ſtates; and alſo for laws not only granting them immediate foſterage and protection, but holding out to them, after due and faithful ſervices, profits and intereſts in thoſe very ſtates.

Theſe matters, ſubſtantiated and properly impreſſed, will amply compenſate, by the moſt happy conſequences, for the praiſe-worthy, unceaſing endeavours of the inſtigators of an inquiry, which proclaims a debt juſtly due by the man of religion as by the moraliſt, and, if events are to be foreſeen, I would add the politician; for to cultivate the grounds and to defend them by the very ſame identical perſons, when we conſider the morality of our troops either in war or peace, would be equally political and humane; and that ſuch might be the conſequence were the *Africans* or *Creoles*, after a certain time of ſervice, to enjoy their liberty, aided by kind treatment, with a well-digeſted ſyſtem for their arrangements, including marriages, &c. which from the increaſe of colonial-population, together with the uſe of the plough and other imple-

implements of husbandry so ably reasoned on by Mr. *Wilberforce*, I am clear would lessen the necessity for so frequent importations. And in so much have I reason to believe would the Africans prefer being transplanted to our colonies to remaining at home in their own country, were they to experience the sosterage I most humbly beg to propose, and no longer have to consider themselves slaves, but indented servants or apprentices for a limited time, that I look forward with pleasure to the day, and that not very distant, when the colonies will be recruited from *Africa* by the interference of the identical persons who may obtain for their services, FREEDOM, on the plan, or a somewhat similar plan with that which, with great humility, I will beg to state.

Experience proves, that to act consistent with our own advantages, it is often necessary, by *fines*, *penalties*, and *rewards*, not only to induce, but to oblige us, in the first instance, to do those very things, for which, when done, and that we find the compliance to be profitable to ourselves, neither penalties nor rewards become longer necessary. Our interest then becomes our principle, and hence arises the necessity of often enacting laws, which oblige us to do those very things by the execution of which we are the principal gainers. There was a day, early in the last century, when in the sister kingdom it was necessary

to render it highly penal to plough with horſes by their tails, ſuch being the practice of many of the uninformed at that day; and but a very few years back it was found neceſſary, in the ſame country, to grant a premium to the farmers who preſerved their own corn from vermin; for by one of the corn laws in that country it was enacted, that *ſheaf-corn* raiſed on ſtands, of certain heights and dimenſions, to preſerve it from vermin and the damp of the ground, was entitled to a ſum per barrel (parliamentary bounty) which in that country is rateable by weight; neither of which laws are now in exiſtence, not being longer neceſſary, as every perſon knows the compliance with the wiſdom of the legiſlature to be his own individual intereſt; and although it becomes the immediate intereſt of the *farmers*, *waggoners*, &c. in this country, that their roads ſhould continue in good order for the eaſe of their teams, yet it appeared abſolutely neceſſary that the wheels of certain dimenſions in point of their width ſhould, in proportion to their narrowneſs, pay heavier tolls, to induce, I may ſay in a certain ſenſe, to compel them to uſe wheels which act as rollers, in place of *chiſel-like wheels*, which are the deſtruction of roads.

I beg to ſay, it appears, that penal laws, as well as laws granting bounties or premiums, ſeldom loſe ſight of the general good, at leaſt they ought not; notwithſtanding which they are not the leſs neceſſary

neceſſary for thoſe who are to benefit by them. The very regulations reſpecting ſobriety and cleanlineſs in the military, how invaluable to themſelves! Yet by obligation they are neceſſarily enforced:—ſurely theſe facts prove how futile is the argument, that there is no neceſſity of pointing out *by law*, to the venders of ſlaves or to planters, the conſequent advantages they muſt experience by treating their captives with humanity;—no, firſt, let that *evangelic virtue* be effected by laws comprehending wiſdom and charity, and their long continuance as living ſtatutes will no more, than that of the *preſerving-corn-law* in Ireland, be long neceſſary; for by the exerciſe of reaſon and humanity, and by that only, can the colonies continue profitable to their proprietors, or of advantage to the mother country.

To ſupport the idea of the neceſſity of ſome ſuch mode as that which, with great deference, I am about to propoſe, I pray indulgence for attempting to introduce matter, which at firſt view, may appear not ſo pertinent to the preſent caſe; yet from it perhaps the outlines of very uſeful regulations may be borrowed, and rendered applicable to their ſituations, who are the ſubject of thoſe obſervations. It was a melancholy truth, and known to every candid inquirer in the kingdom of Ireland ſo late as the year 1786, that, notwithſtanding the ſuppoſed humanity and attention of perſons of that claſs, who generally filled the offices of high ſheriffs, of lord

mayors, mayors, magiſtrates, &c. with the further checks of the judges of the King's Bench and of circuit judges, the generality of thoſe who were ſo unfortunate as to be doomed to impriſonment in that country, whether for crimes or even for debt, ſeldom experienced that humanity and conſideration which various acts of parliament actually preſcribed. On the contrary, ſuch were the repeated neglects, and I may ſay cruelties and tyrannies in thoſe manſions of wretchedneſs, which appear on the journals of parliament, that the legiſlature found it neceſſary no longer to depend merely on thoſe perſons whoſe duty it really was to ſee that the humanity and conſideration intended by the laws were exerciſed; but, to their immortal honour, enacted a law in 1786, which authoriſed the lord-lieutenant to appoint a perſon, conſidered fit and proper, as inſpector-general of the priſons in Ireland; and the ſame act empowered the grand-juries of every city and county in the kingdom at ——— aſſizes, with the approbation of the circuit-judge, to appoint a local inſpector, eſpecially for their priſons, with a competent ſalary; whoſe duty it was to ſee that all the ſpecified regulations, and other humane matters conſiſtent with the ſecurity of the priſons, were punctually carried into effect; and thoſe local inſpectors were enjoined to lay the exact ſtate and condition of their priſons, together with that of the priſoners, in the moſt accurate manner, before the magiſtrates

of the *quarter ſeſſions*, and alſo the judges of aſſize before; and twenty-one days before the meeting of parliament, they were alſo obliged to ſend ſimilar reports, together with the return of all perſons in cuſtody, and the clerk of the crown's return or calendar of all perſons who had been tried within the year, whether acquitted or found guilty, with the ſentences of the convicted, to the inſpector-general of priſons, to be arranged and laid by him before both Houſes of Parliament on the firſt day of each ſeſſion; and the inſpector-general was enjoined to inſpect the priſons of the kingdom from time to time, in order to ſee that their various officers, as well the *local inſpector*, as *doctor*, *chaplain*, *keeper*, &c. diſcharged their ſeveral duties, and that the humane intentions of the laws were punctually executed; and further, that he ſhould fix upon proper ſites and ſituations for all places of confinement, and adviſe the modes of conſtructing them, on principles of healthfulneſs, convenience, and ſecurity. The happy effects of the foregoing regulations have been ſuch as have ſurpaſſed the moſt flattering ~~of their~~ expectations; and therefore it is that I have intruded this narration. For as it might be contended, that any other than the preſent patronage and protection will not be neceſſary, depending on the conſideration and humanity of the planters, and of their ſtewards; I pray thoſe gentlemen, who may advance ſuch opinions, to inquire in their own breaſts, what greater preten-

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ſions have many of thoſe perſons, long in the actual habits of taſk-maſters (giving them no harſher name) than the perſons I have mentioned of ſuch information and of ſuch ſtations in a neighbouring country, or admitting them endowed with that heavenly ſenſibility which is ever alive to the ſufferings of the wretched, can thoſe gentlemen for a moment doubt that this ſuppoſed *native exquiſite* ſenſation—this neceſſary edge of perception, will not in time be blunted by the exerciſe of ſuch trade? Should thoſe gentlemen heſitate in their deciſions, they muſt judge from their own feelings, but not from a knowledge of human nature: hence ariſes the neceſſity of *guardian vigilance*.

My firſt principle is, that no man, or body of men, whatever, have a right to enſlave or puniſh, perſons not ſubject to their laws, and more particularly thoſe who never gave them offence; for the will of the *deſpot*, no more than that of *power*, can never conſtitute a right; but could it be poſſible to better the condition of a people, although in the act of doing ſo profits would ariſe to the undertakers of the project, the endeavouring ſo to do, ſeems not only allowable but praiſe-worthy; nor will it leſſen the merit of the act, if, by the execution of the plan, we leſſen the misfortunes or grievances of others: therefore my propoſal goes to the abo-

abolition of the ſlavery of Africans in our colonies, and from the preſent time to begin that glorious work, by making it known, with the neceſſary prudence, that ſlavery is to ceaſe by the following, or ſome ſuch ſubſtitution of ſervices—viz. firſt to conſider all thoſe perſons (now in a ſtate of vaſſalage) from the preſent period indented ſervants for *ſeven years* to their now proprietors: in the next place, to grant freedom within this year to *one-ſeventh* of thoſe who have been in vaſſalage for the greateſt length of time ſince their arriving at the ages of *ſixteen* and *twenty-one years*—viz. the former being that of the women, and the latter of the men, in actual ſervice in the iſlands; in the ſucceeding year in like manner, *one-ſixth* to receive freedom; in the third year *one fifth*, and ſo on in ſuch proportion, as that the whole of the ſurvivors of the now ſlaves may be actually free within *ſeven years*; which gradual liberation may, with ſafety to the planters, and with comfort to the ſlaves, be effected; and, from the preſent moment, no African ſhould be purchaſed on the ground of ſlavery, or otherwiſe handed over to a planter than as an indented ſervant for *ſeven years*,* at which pe-

* I will not attempt to ſay that even the indenturing of perſons brought, contrary to their inclinations, from their native country, by us, to whom they never gave offence, is not exerciſing a ſuppoſed right, which our wealth and conſequence alone

period, as having ſerved the limited time or apprenticeſhip, he ſhould be conſidered free; and during the time of ſuch apprenticeſhip, or for the time ſpecified in his indenture, the inſpector-general of the colony and the local inſpectors of the diſtrict (hereafter to be mentioned) ſhould attend to their intereſts, and conſider them within their care,—ſo far as the laws ſhall direct.

Amongſt various matters which may be taken into conſideration in the colonies for the completion of the great, the good, and the neceſſary undertaking, the following humble ſuggeſtions may have ſome claim to notice, and not prove altogether unworthy the reflections of thoſe who have power and influence on this ſide the water, and of the deliberate and humane conſideration of the colonial aſſemblies; for without their co-operation it would be abſolute folly to ſuppoſe (ſo long as the traffic is permitted under any conditions whatever), or to expect the deſirable profits, which every being exiſting, muſt be ſolicitous for—

alone can entitle us to; but when it is conſidered that the condition of theſe indented ſervants is likely to be bettered by ſuch mode of ſervice, and by its conſequences, the idea of injuſtice diminiſhes, and but little on that head ſhould remain with a people, who have heard of the expedient and political right of impreſſing, either for the land or ſea ſervice: no doubt there may be a fine-ſpun diſtinction in thoſe caſes; but fine ſpinning diſpoſes to brittleneſs.

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viz. the comfort and relative advantage of that claſs, now conſidered ſlaves; therefore I beg to mention what occurs to me as outlines for colonial regulations,—and that without reciting the charges of neglect or cruelty made againſt the various perſons who, from the moment of the captives landing in the colonies, have concern, more or leſs, with them, or mentioning the defence ſet up in contradiction of, and to invalidate theſe accuſations: but as it is poſſible to commit ſerious abuſes,—although ſome may plead againſt its probability,—prudence directs the enaction of ſuch laws and regulations as, in future, may, in as much as human nature can deviſe, prevent their commiſſion.

In a former part of theſe Suggeſtions I mentioned that, as certain neceſſary regulations (in part hitherto enacted) muſt depend on the colonies, I would decline in the preſent moment to ſay any thing on thoſe ſpecial points; but whereas my idea is, that, without new regulations, the happineſs and comfort of the captives, or Creoles, can never be expected, I beg to ſuggeſt certain matters which appear to me as indiſpenſable to be introduced, the more perfectly and ſyſtematically to effect the deſirable objects preſcribed by the laws—by attaching reſponſibility on certain perſons, and the more candidly and accurately to have every matter connected with the

employments, intereſts, &c. of all perſons engaged, whether at trades or culture, in the colonies, laid as well before the colonial aſſemblies as before the Britiſh Parliament, as often as may be conſidered prudent and neceſſary; and as the prevention of cruelty, or even the omiſſion of the exerciſe of humanity, together with giving that claſs of human beings, hitherto named ſlaves, comfort, permanent ſecurity, with liberty and common intereſts in the ſoil, after certain ſervices, and at certain periods, may appear objects worthy a great and conſiderate people, and alſo as the increaſe of population, and proviſion for the aged and infirm, call on their wiſdom and humanity, I beg to ſtate what occurs to me on thoſe heads. And alſo, as it would be wiſe and ſatisfactory that a true ſtatement of all and every matter connected with theſe important concerns, comprehending progreſs, increaſe, or decreaſe of colonial population—liberation—and how afterwards occupied—cultivation,—general attentions (however to be ſpecially aſcertained)—with all and every other matter intimately connected with the comfort of the employed, and the advantage or diſadvantage of the planters, ſhould not only be laid at certain periods before the colonial aſſemblies and governors of the iſlands, but ought alſo to be properly digeſted and arranged, and laid annually before the Parliament of this kingdom by the proper officer, through the medium of his Majeſty's

jeſty's colonial governors. For the effecting of theſe purpoſes, I beg to propoſe that his Majeſty may appoint one or more inſpector-generals for each of the colonies, who ſhall diſcharge the duties hereafter to be ſtated, and that the colonial aſſemblies, in their legiſlative capacity, or any other claſs of perſons in the colony to whom they may give ſuch power, ſhould appoint diſtrictal or local inſpectors;—in like manner to ſee that the ſpirit of the laws and humane intentions of the legiſlature be ſcrupulouſly carried into effect; and to diſcharge ſuch other or ſimilar duties as ſhall hereafter be enjoined.

I beg to obſerve, that my object is to aboliſh ſlavery in word and deed, and that the planters in future ſhall only have a right to hold either Africans or Creoles as indented ſervants or apprentices, that neither hardſhips nor cruelties ſhould be impoſed on them, nor unreaſonable requiſitions made at the mere will of the planter, ſteward, or taſk-maſter; and that, in all caſes, the ſervant or apprentice, whilſt in thoſe ſtations, ſhall be conſidered under the immediate protection of the law, with all its advantages; for the due execution of which, as well as for the ſeeing that the employed be obedient and attentive to their employers in all reaſonable commands, the local or diſtrictal inſpectors are to be appointed, and a part of ſuch inſpectors duty ſhould be, immedi-

ately on entering on ſervice, regularly to ſtate the *nature*, *extent*, and *ſtate of cultivation*, *of each plantation*, within his diſtrict, or ſo much pertinent matter as may appear neceſſary to the colonial aſſembly, to afford accurate information relative to the following points for any future purpoſe—viz. the number of its inhabitants, ages, ſexes, and their employments—the length of time that they have been in the poſſeſſion of the then proprietor, or of any other (if this can be learned), whether married or otherwiſe—whether they have children—and, if living, how diſpoſed of—what the annual importation or introduction of perſons—what the number of births, and what of deaths—what the conduct of all perſons concerned towards the ſervants, whether of ſtewards, medical men, &c. all which could be ſo made out for each particular plantation as to afford the higheſt ſatisfaction and the beſt information of all and every occurrence and improvement poſſible, and the report would at the ſame time be inſtrumental in preventing the exerciſe of unreaſonable conduct on any of the employed, and ſhould faithfully relate the improvement not only of each colony but of each plantation: and I flatter myſelf would prove that kindneſs, ſo compatible with reaſon, is the beſt mode of increaſing colonial conſequence: by the increaſe of produce, through the willingneſs and capability of the employed, and by the increaſe of population;

tion; for a proper regard to the *females*, the encouragement of marriage, the care of the *pregnant*, an humane attention to them during their *laying-in*, and a due foſterage of the new-born infants, muſt favour population; neglect (to give it no other name) on theſe points having incontrovertibly been the principal cauſe of the unceaſing neceſſity for freſh importations.

As the increaſe of population is admitted by all to be profitable, the young breeding *negreſs* is, on that account, of more value than the *ſteril*. Laying aſide the humanity of the matter—the ſupporting the health and ſpirits of the *pregnant*, having their employments, in the advanced ſtages of their pregnancy, ſuited to their conditions, and having proper care taken of them and their infants, during child-bed, and ſuch other attentions afterwards as may appear neceſſary, will amply repay itſelf by the production of an healthful, vigorous, and numerous progeny; independent of the heartfelt reward for having diſcharged a great and eſſential duty to the moſt pitiable and helpleſs; therefore I ſhould beg to propoſe, that *lying-in houſes*, at convenient diſtances, be eſtabliſhed, under the direction of qualified perſons, to which, if circumſtances will permit, the pregnant women ſhould be removed at a reaſonable time previous to the periods when they have reaſon to expect to *lie in*, and

and that they and their infants ſhould remain there ſo long after delivery as may ſeem prudent to the *doctor* or *accoucheur* of the hoſpital; the proprietor of the woman, if he ſhould have property in the child, to pay a certain ſum for her expenſes, and thoſe of the infant, until their return to his plantation: if not, the expenſes to be ſet down to the diſtrictal account.

The deſirable advantages, reſpecting population, likely to ariſe from the ſingle circumſtance of attention to the poor women on theſe occaſions, as alſo from taking proper care of the new-born infants, and from having them inoculated at proper periods, would prevent the unceaſing mortality of negro children, which muſt be inevitable until the mother experiences a care, tender and ſuited to her condition, and the new-born infants the neceſſary, yet ſimple attentions, calculated to prevent or remedy (ſhould they exiſt) complaints ſo fatal as to carry off the greater number of the new-born (independent of immature deliveries), and of infants under three years old.

There is another eſtabliſhment which (if none ſuch at the preſent moment exiſts) I ſhould beg to propoſe—namely, diſtrictal, *poor* or *alms houſes*, which would obviate a difficulty likely to ariſe from the liberation of infirm and aged ſervants, after

after having ſerved the indented period; but it may ſeem not unreaſonable that the perſon who had experienced the profits of ſuch paupers early labour ſhould contribute ſomething more than the rateable tax, payable according to the diſtrictal aſſeſſments by all proprietors of ſuch ſervants, to the common ſupport of ſuch almshouſes; and this conſideration may induce a further kindneſs to the ſervant during the period of his ſervitude: as a timely attention may prevent the neceſſity of ſuch after-proviſion, and having ſuch eſtabliſhments will not only ſyſtemize humanity, but will releaſe the planters, or other employers, from a very great inconvenience, and a much greater expenſe, in endeavouring, whether through charity or obligation, to provide for ſuch aged or infirm paupers on their own plantations; but all theſe matters will be more conſiſtently provided for by the colonial aſſemblies than I can preſume to ſuggeſt, circumſtanced as I muſt be from want of adequate information.

The eſtabliſhing of thoſe houſes would become immediately neceſſary, ſhould my propoſals meet with ſucceſs, as it is to be preſumed a number of aged and infirm perſons of both ſexes at this moment require—"reſt from their labours," with ſuch attentions and comforts as may render the *eve* of life the reverſe of the *dawn*, proclaiming

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the juſt *otium* of the deſerving with the *dignity of the grantors.*

Although the general acts of the Britiſh legiſlature may not have force in colonial regulations, I hope care will be taken, in this particular caſe, to ſubject the maſters, and all other perſons concerned in the care or management of the Africans (hereafter to be purchaſed or engaged) to the ſtricteſt inquiry, by the proper officer of the colonial port where landed, touching all and every matter before ſtated as obligatory, from the time of the ſhip's taking her departure from Great Britain to the time of her arrival in the Weſt-Indies, comprehending the regulations and obligations preſcribed for the coaſt of Africa, as well as whatever may have occurred on the Middle Paſſage; as it is to be preſumed the unalterable intention of the legiſlature is, that neither fraud, deception, neglect, nor cruelty, ſhall find a *ſanctuary* wherever *Britiſh* or *Britiſh colonial* laws extend: wherefore, I flatter myſelf in the hope, that the ſhip's regiſter will be enjoined to be again examined, with the draft of her capability, for the purpoſe of diſcovering whether any alterations have been made in her approved fitting or interior ſtructure, ſince her leaving Great Britain, injurious to the freight; or whether more than the allotted number were at any time put on board, without the allowable cauſes of taking

taking them from other ſhips, foundering or on fire; and all and every other inquiry relative to the treatment and care of the Africans on the Middle Paſſage, together with all and every other matter connected with the mode of procuring them, &c. as ſtated in the former part of thoſe obſervations: and it is to be preſumed, that ſpecial care will be taken in the colonies not to allow of, in the indenting of the new-acquired ſervants, the ſeparation of families on any account whatſoever; but that the entire of every ſuch family, as before ſtated, ſhall be diſpoſed of to the ſame plantation.

To enter into any inquiry on this ſide the water for the purpoſe of better aſcertaining the cauſes of the infant mortality would be idle and unprofitable, as theſe muſt be beſt known to profeſſional men on the ſpot: it ſeems ſufficient for us to feel the neceſſity of obviating ſuch matters as muſt not only prove injurious to the poor pregnant women in their advanced periods of geſtation, but during their *travail*, often in *child-bed*, and alſo to their new-born infants.

To repeat what has been ſo often ſtated, and remains uncontroverted, on thoſe points, ſo big with inconſideration, indelicacy, and inhumanity, muſt make nature ſhudder anew; but ſuch ſenſations are now neceſſary; and the drawback on the increaſe of progeny (did nothing elſe induce an

humane and conſiderate attention to pregnant women and their infants) cannot fail to urge the eſtabliſhment of *lying-in houſes*.

To ſuppoſe a poor ſlave, until the moment of her agonizing pain, toiling in ſuch a burning climate, unſupplied with the ſuited diet or drinks, the proper means of laying, want (although neceſſary) of timely ſcientific aid, no means of cleanlineſs or comfort for herſelf, or for the new-born babe; not ſo much as one inch of linen, or muſlin cloth, or any other proper matter, to defend the irritable new-ligatured navel from the effects of ſuch incruſtation as is unavoidable where ſome ſoft ſubſtance is not ſupplied; its excruciating ſtimulus, followed by *tetanus* or *locked-jaw*; not medicine of any ſort, though trivial, to aſſiſt when neceſſary in diſcharging the *meconium*, or long-retained acrid contents of the bowels, ſo frequent a cauſe in warm climates of convulſion and mortification; no ſtated period for her return to her labour, but that diſcretional in the proprietor, his agent, or perhaps the *ſervant doctor* of the plantation; and if exempt from inſupportable fatigue or toil for a ſuppoſed reaſonable time, neither ſhe nor her infant rationally ſupplied with ſuch comforts and medicine in her *hut* as the hoſpital would afford: hence ariſes the indiſpenſable neceſſity of ſuch eſtabliſhments, prompted as ſtrongly by policy as humanity.

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The foſterage of age and infancy will amply repay the expenſe and trouble of the arrangements, independent of the invaluable heartfelt ſatisfaction of attending to the crying calls of the wretched and pitiable: no longer will the creeping half dead being be goaded on to unproductive labour, that a ſomething may appear to be produced for his employer to aſſiſt in defraying the entire of his expenſe; for admitting, as propoſed, the proprietor, in addition to the rateable aſſeſſment, to pay one-fourth of the ſum calculated for the ſupport of the object in the poor-houſe, he will find himſelf conſiderably relieved, and therefore will not heſitate in complying with the releaſe of the *aged*, *decrepid*, or *infirm*, from labour, ſo ſoon as they are found to be worn out: but admitting no ſuch eſtabliſhment, it is not impoſſible to ſuppoſe that there are ſome perſons who, rather than burden themſelves with the whole of the expenſe during the lives of theſe wretched paupers by releaſing them from all labour, might keep them toiling, although not very profitably, to their laſt moments, having no intereſt in their longevity.

The greateſt difficulty which I find, is in propoſing the portion which the proprietor of the indented ſervants ſhould of right have in the riſing progeny, to intereſt them in favouring the procreation of a vigorous race; keeping clear, however, of what might be conſidered thraldom; for

its name, but more eſpecially its eſſence, under any form or ſhape, ſhould never be revived on the innocent and unoffending.

As the intention of being uſeful pleads the beſt excuſe, to that apologiſt I appeal for intruding my opinion without more perfect information and ſounder judgment; but feeling myſelf the debtor of mankind, this *mite* my nature impels me to pay.

I ſuppoſe there to be children born within periods of indentureſhip, and others after that period: to the former I will firſt ſpeak.

The objects of preventing the neceſſity of conſtant importations from Africa are, in various ſenſes, ſo great, that their attainment can ſcarcely be purchaſed at too great pains or expenſe; therefore, from the firſt moment, every reaſonable encouragement ſhould be given to *celibacy*, until ſuch time as by nature's laws it may be ſuppoſed the ſexes are capable of procreation; to effect which, it ſhould be enjoined, under penalties, to prevent, as much as poſſible, too early an intercourſe between them; for it is well known, that in moſt caſes immature cohabitation, as well as its too great frequency, eſtabliſhes *ſterility*; therefore, to complete this neceſſary reſtraint virgin habitations (as they may be called) ſhould be eſtabliſhed, in which the youthful females from age ſhould be lodged (under the

the care of proper females, who ſhould be rewarded for their fidelity); and in all reſpects theſe perſons ſhould make thoſe their reſidences from age, until diſpoſed of in marriage to perſons conſidered fit and proper to become their partners: which pleaſing treat, might operate as a premium for diligence and good conduct; but to compenſate the proprietor for the extraordinary price or value of his breeding negreſs; for the defect of profit ariſing from her ſuited labour during her pregnancy; for her expenſes in the *lying-in houſe*; for the after attention to the infant in inoculation, &c. and farther, for the drawback on the mother's labour, in order that ſhe might pay neceſſary attention to her offspring; he ſhould be entitled to a certain portion of the parent's labour, or of either of them (in addition to the time ſpecified in their indentures), for each and every year of the children's age until the termination of their indented ſervitude, which ſhould releaſe the child from all labour-like obligation to the proprietor, or by *their* paying a certain ſum, the freedom (as it may be termed) of the infants, born during the indentureſhip of the mother might be procured; but in caſe of the deaths or infirmities of the parents, then ſuch child or children might be obliged to remain, as if actually indented to the proprietor of the mother, until their arrival at ages, viz. the males at years, and the females at years; benefited, however, by the laws, and guardianed by the perſons

ſons to be appointed for thoſe purpoſes: but I ſhould beg to propoſe, that all children born after the time of the mother's ſervitude having ceaſed, ſhould be born free; and that the whole of the expenſes, if a pauper, ſhould be paid by common aſſeſſment.

By inſtituting theſe, or ſome ſuch means, population will reward humanity, and the African will become grateful, not merely from his being the willing culturer, but the ſoldier, after his ſervitude; from which period his rights will be eſtabliſhed, and his intereſts keep pace (inaſmuch as he has life and property) with every other inhabitant of the colony; then, and not ſooner, will be eſtabliſhed in the Weſt Indian colonies, on a rock-like foundation, ſecurity, true peace, and profit.

In reſpect to a multiplicity of matter mediately, and in ſome points immediately, connected with the nature of diſembarking the Africans in the Weſt Indies; attending to them until diſpoſed of; having proper regiſters of the numbers, ſexes, and ages, ſtate of blood, connexions; of their conſtitutions, health, &c. and to whom handed over as indented ſervants; with all and every other matter which may concern them, theſe, as they will concern the government of the colony, muſt be regulated and arranged by perſons qualified on the ſpot: and one of the duties of the inſpector-general

general, or other perſons appointed by the crown for each colony, ſhould be to attend on the importation of the Africans, or other perſons brought for colonial ſervitude, in order that he may ſee and know the ſtate and condition of every ſuch imported perſon, and to whom they are handed over or indented, and to what plantations ſent; as this will aid him in his general inſpection of all and every one of them in the colony, which ſhould be made at leaſt twice a year; and it ſhould be obligatory by law, for the *local* or diſtrictal inſpector to viſit each and every plantation, or other place where ſuch indented ſervants are lodged, or employed, within his diſtrict, twice every week; and once in every week he ſhould viſit the *hoſpitals* or *lying-in houſes*, in order to prove a check on the medical men, ſtewards, overſeers, &c. and to ſee that every proper and humane attention is paid, as well to preſerve the health and vigour of the ſervants, as to reſtore them when impaired; except in the article of drug-preſcription, which is not ſuppoſed to be within the capacity of men not medical to form proper judgments on: but as the ſcience of phyſic comprehends the moſt uſeful and extenſive knowledge of nature, men learned in that profeſſion appear to deſerve preference in obtaining the appointments of inſpectors, due regard being had to their zeal, morals, and religious principles.

As it is my idea, that all and every *African*, equally as the *Creole*, now in a ſtate of ſlavery, ſhall be abſolutely free within *ſeven years*, their liberation to take place in ſucceſſion as before ſtated: and as the freedom of all perſons, hereafter to be employed as indented ſervants, ſhould commence, at fartheſt, after ſeven years indentureſhip, there will be a perpetual, yet moderate, ſyſtematic *manumiſſion*, or releaſe from forced or dictated labour, which is ſeldom, if ever, profitable; and one eſſential advantage of this mode of liberation will be, that the planter is only to give up *one-ſeventh* of his ſtock annually, and that the perſons ſo enlarged, by having been at leaſt ſeven years in the colony, will acquire the neceſſary knowledge for their own preſervation, conſiſtent conduct, and maintenance; which information they muſt be ignorant of, until experience, their only monitor, inſtructs them; for were they to be actually free, and attempt to manage for themſelves, from the time of their arrivals, although ſtrong and vigorous, they muſt lead moſt wretched lives, naked, uncomfortably lodged, and half ſtarved.

I cannot omit this opportunity to eſcape without mentioning that the planters, or proprietors, can have no plea in reſpect to their being ſurpriſed into the partial loſs or privation of *ſlave-labour*; for they had reaſon to expect *that* in the groſs, long ere now, and in a manner by no means ſo deſirable

for them, as that which herein is moſt humbly ſuggeſted.

As an objection may poſſibly ariſe to the purchaſing (as it may be termed) the labour or ſervices of the *Africans* merely for ſeven years, which would render the hitherto ſlaves of leſs intrinſic value to their employers than if bound for the whole term of their lives; and therefore, that the Britiſh purchaſers would unavoidably loſe the choice of the market in Africa, not being able to give ſo high a price for the ſubjects as now; conſequently that other nations would profit by our diſcretion and humanity; I beg to call to the recollection of gentlemen what appeared as information in the general report laid before Parliament under the head, *France*, viz. "That the inducements to the ſubjects of this country (Great Britain) to enter into a trade of this nature are, in the firſt place, a bounty of *forty livres* per ton, which, according to the French mode of admeaſurement, is equal to *eighty livres* per ton of our admeaſurement. In the ſecond place, the French government has granted a premium of *one hundred and ſixty livres* per head upon ſlaves imported into the iſlands of *Tobago*, *St. Lucia*, *Martinique*, and *Guadaloupe*, and *two hundred and thirty livres* per head for thoſe imported into *Aux Cayes*, on the ſouthern ſide of *St. Domingo*. The bounty on the tonnage is paid in

" France before or ſoon after the ſailing of the " ſhip: the bounty on the negroes is paid in the " iſlands by the treaſury there; or if there is not " money enough in the treaſury of the iſland, then " by an order on *Old France:* and in the third " place, the prices the negroes ſell at in the French " colonies are from *thirty* to *fifty* per cent. higher " than negroes ſell at in our iſlands." And it is further ſtated by the ſame apparently intelligent perſons, " that the French do not want ſhips to " carry on this trade; they have many fine ſhips " already in it, and ſhips are at preſent cheap in " France; but the circumſtance which commands " the whole, is the great advantage we have in " capital."

Such having been the policy of a neighbouring rival country in her day of quiet and reflection, to which we ſhould be aſhamed to deſerve to be conſidered inferior in wiſdom, it may not appear unworthy the attention of our legiſlators to inquire, in a probable ſenſe, how far ſimilar * bounties

* The bounty ſhould not be rateable according to the tonnage, but in proportion to the ſhip's aërial ſlave-carrying ſpace: and granting a premium in this way, would induce the proprietors of ſhips intended for the conveyance of Africans to the Weſt Indies to form them commodious for the purpoſe, as on that a great ſhare of their profit would depend; but neglecting that commodiouſneſs in the fitting, proves, a greater indifference to the human freight than to other trafficable matter.

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would compenſate for leſſening the value of *Africans* hereafter to be imported, and merely diſpoſed of as indented ſervants for *ſeven years*; which, in all probability, would be attended with another eſſential advantage, viz. that of retaining Britiſh ſhips in Britiſh employment: and here I cannot withhold an opinion, as a perſon priding himſelf in being the ſubject of Great Britain, viz. that for the honour of this country, no one perſon as *proprietor*, *maſter*, or *commander*, of a Britiſh ſhip, ſhould (under the forfeiture of his ſhip and cargo, or the fining and impriſonment of him, in ſuch manner as the law of this country may devile, if ſuch ſhip cannot be attached) carry on the trade of purchaſing, procuring, or carrying Africans for ſlavery or ſervitude for any other nation or people, otherwiſe than according to the poſitive letter and ſpirit of the Britiſh law, made obligatory on all perſons carrying Africans for ſervitude to the Britiſh colonies: but whereas it might be difficult, or next to impoſſible, to effect the regulations herein propoſed, where we ſhould have no right in African-coaſt-inſpection, or afterwards in the colonies of other nations, I beg to mention, that the extent of our commerce and greatneſs of capital, which enable us to ſend a more extenſive aſſortment of merchandiſe to Africa, with another great eſſential, that of an higher price for colonial produce in our own and in foreign markets, from our long credits, ſurely muſt enable this ſtate and the colonies to

pay ſuch prices by premium, or otherwiſe, for our ſervants, as will defeat the poſſibility of any other nation, or people, obtaining the ſmalleſt advantage from the exerciſe of our *juſtice* and *humanity*, from which no earthly matter ſhould be privileged to divert men; but, above all, a people profeſſing the worſhip of the univerſal Redeemer, whoſe only and emphatical command it was, "to love one "another:" therefore, on the whole of theſe grounds, although no perſon wiſhes more for extenſive tolerance, as well in profiting commerce as the conſtitution, than I do, yet as the greatneſs of our trade affords unprecedented employment for nautical adventurers, I could wiſh, as it ſeems congenial with the ſpirit of our conſtitution, that no Briton, as commander, director, or agent, of any ſhip belonging to a Britiſh ſubject, and conſidered as Britiſh, ſhould be privileged to retain the name, and enter his Majeſty's ports, otherwiſe than as an *alien*, who ſhould directly or indirectly ſanction, or aſſiſt in carrying on the African trade herein alluded to, for any other diſtricts, plantations, or colonies, than thoſe belonging to Great Britain; otherwiſe the want of principle, and the defect of controul (although under the name of Britons), would permit them to carry on the trade with its former-charged abominations and cruelties; indelible ſtigmas, merited by the nation which permits them, and which would enable theſe perſons (by being exempt from controul) eſſentially to injure

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the engagements in Africa for the Britiſh plantations; therefore, if not for Britain's intereſts by carrying to the Britiſh colonies only, Britiſh ſhips, in this particular, ſhould not be permitted to act; for whatever cauſe there might have been on an occaſion not long ſince to ſay, " live *conſtitution*, " although *commerce* may ſuffer." I think it always right to ſay—live *beneficence*, periſh *avarice*.

The good effects of bounties, or premiums, are ſo well known, that it is unneceſſary to recite even a part of their numerous advantages; that the uſe of the plough and other implements of huſbandry ſhould be encouraged is evident; that graſſes and ſuited corn, to ſerve as provender for the cattle to work the grounds with ſuch machinery, is equally evident; that the conſequences will be, the ſaving of human labour, and the enrichment and melioration of the cultured ſoil by means of the increaſed quantities of manure procured by the increaſe of the working and other cattle, when plentifully provided with ſuch farinaceous or gramineous productions as the climate and ſoil will favour, is incontrovertible; and that theſe happy effects would be further attended with releaſe from the toilſome drudgery of the daily cutting or pulling graſs by the wearied culturer after his other taxed labour is finiſhed, is as demonſtrable as deſirable: therefore, although the planter would profit by the increaſe of produce in his crops, and by not having a like

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neceſſity for the proportion of manual labour; by the keeping his cultured grounds in an higher ſtate of improvement, and by the heartfelt ſatisfaction which he would feel, in ſeeing that his ſervants returned from their reaſonable labour to repoſe and to enjoy their natural reſt, in place of further toiling for the cattle's provender after their taxed labour; I beg the liberty of ſaying, that, notwithſtanding all theſe advantages, in the infant ſtate of the meaſure (to break through the jog-trot pace) it will be neceſſary (as by the corn law in Ireland) to hold out a premium, rateable according to the quantity of grounds laid down annually under graſſes and corn (which will be attended with the further advantage of obviating ſcarcities); and the like premium ſhould be granted for the quantity of the plantations cultivated and dreſſed by the plough, or other implements of huſbandry, which will leſſen the neceſſity of human labour, and, I have good reaſon to believe, will prove the policy, as it poſitively does the humanity, of the ideas of Mr. Wilberforce, &c.

Humanity ever pleading in favour of the infant race, it might not be neceſſary to hold out rewards for a due attention to theſe innocents; but as a knowledge of this praiſe-worthy foſterage muſt ſupply the beſt teſtimony of ſuch conduct, and that ſuch ſervices deſerve more than verbal approbation, I ſhould beg to propoſe, to grant to the

the plantation–and the hoſpital–phyſicians ſuch proportion as may be conſidered reaſonable and proper, viz. a ſum for every infant born within ſuch medical gentleman's diſtricts on the child's arriving at age. But finding it to be cuſtomary for ſlaves under their preſent circumſtances to purchaſe their freedom from their proprietors, I conſider it unneceſſary to mention the circumſtances under which, in their ſtate of indentureſhip, that might be effected; agreements on thoſe heads being beſt made between the parties themſelves, and ſo rendered more pleaſing to each.

The attempt to reaſon on the multiplicity of matter which crowds in on my imagination, mediately and immediately connected with the well-being of the *employer* and *employed* (were I capable of it) muſt render this intended brief relation ſo prolix as to defeat its purpoſe, by preventing men importantly employed, and others who do not like long (although neceſſary) relations, from peruſing it; therefore I will defer theſe ſuggeſtions to another day, which however appear to me highly neceſſary to add to the honour and intereſts of Great Britain, the benefit and ſecurity of the planter, and the happineſs of the employed, in earneſt hopes that my prophecy (although by ſome it may be deemed preſumptuous) will be verified; and if from thoſe hints perſons, more able and better qualified, can deduce ſuch inferences as may

lead to conſiderate and advantageous regulations, ſo anxiouſly by millions wiſhed for, I will conſider myſelf (although far removed in the back ground) moſt fortunate.

Having ſaid ſo much concerning the duty of inſpectors, I beg leave to ſtate the neceſſity of peculiar chaſtity in the appointment of them; but more particularly in the choice of the director or inſpector in this kingdom; of the general inſpectors on the coaſt of Africa, and of thoſe in the colonies; a this is the pivot on which every thing eſſential tending to the juſt execution of the law, to the nation's honour, and to the African's advantage, muſt turn, requires no elucidation; for unleſs the perſon or perſons appointed to diſcharge the duties of this office poſſeſs indiſpenſable qualifications, viz. humanity, underſtanding, probity, and firmneſs, with the neceſſary degree of fervor to bring thoſe qualities into action, the nation muſt be diſappointed, and the praiſe-worthy intentions of the legiſlature will remain, not only as a dead letter, but, what is worſe, a mere mockery; by permitting error through ignorance, and the exerciſe of fraud and injuſtice under the ſanction of law.—Never to loſe ſight of good accommodation for the freight would be to exerciſe *humanity*;—to approve of proper ſhips, and fit them with advantage for the purpoſe, and to attend to thei victualling, require *underſtanding*;—*probity* would

ſpurn

ſpurn at temptation; *firmneſs*, after a ſhort time, would prove the futility of ſuch attempts, and *zeal* or *fervor* would awake neceſſary diſpatch, and ſo execute the whole, but not by halves. Daily experience teaches me the neceſſity of preſſing theſe obſervations, and my anxiouſneſs to have the beneficent act executed with advantage impels me thus, with all due devotion and reverence for the appointing power at home, and with the neceſſary deference and reſpect for thoſe in the colonies and on the coaſt of Africa, humbly and feelingly to declare, that it is from the misfortune of not having zealous and capable inſpectors, directors, or agents at home and abroad, to diſcharge the neceſſary duties, and from that only, that this plan, or one ſomewhat ſimilar, can (in my humble opinion) fail.

Although we cannot do all the good we wiſh,
Let us endeavour to do, what good we can.

On cleanſing and fumigating Ships.

AS the neceſſity of cleanſing and fumigating ſhips, together with the ſupplying pure air, replete with the living principle, or *oxygen*, cannot be too ſtrongly impreſſed, alike to animate and invigorate as to prevent the diſeaſes of the malignant kind, and tend to remedy thoſe which may happen to exiſt, I beg to ſtate the methods which are ſucceſsfully practiſed in troop-carrying tranſports, the

more particularly in ſuch of them as are much crowded, and where diſeaſe has been attended with mortality. That a man in good health conſumes the vital principle contained in one gallon of atmoſpheric air every minute, is admitted; and that without a ſupply of freſh air, or the reſtoration of that conſumed neceſſary element, no living creature can exiſt, is equally ſo; and hence ariſes the neceſſity of perpetual ſtreams of pure or unbreathed air, or of a new created *oxygen*, the vivifier of the animal creation; and of the removal of that already deprived of the *living principle*, and loaded with noxious exhalations; for even thoſe ariſing from the diſcharges of the moſt healthful are fatal, and more particularly when confined where heat and moiſture, the parents of putrefaction, prevail. As heat and moiſture are the acknowledged agents in forwarding fermentation, they are equally ſo in promoting putrefaction; and hence is evident the impropriety of waſhing between decks, deſtitute of air or gun ports, which favour the entrance of ſtreams of air, neceſſary with expedition to abſorb or dry * up the moiſture; nor is it proper to waſh with vinegar, as more than nineteen of twenty parts of it

* It is with air, in reſpect to water, as with water in its diſſolving and ſuſpending qualities in reſpect to ſalt; for a given quantity of pure atmoſpheric air can only imbibe a certain quantity of water, the pores being then ſaturated—*wet, ſponge-like*—its drying quality ceaſes; therefore the neceſſity for a continued

it are aqueous, conſequently the medicinal acid very ſmall indeed: therefore the waſhing with vinegar is interdicted, and merely its vapour procured by the heated loggerhead with tar, is recommended; as by this ſimple mode, all that is medicinal is obtained, equally from vinegar as tar. The forming *devils* with gunpowder and vinegar, and ſcintillating them off in different parts between decks is frequently put into execution with great advantage; as not only the vitriolic acid of the brimſtone, the vegetable acid of the vinegar, but, what is ſtill of more conſequence, the oxygen of the nitre is let looſe and communicated to every part of the ſhip; and the more completely to obtain the latter, and in larger quantities, the vitriolic acid is poured on nitre, contained in earthen pipkins, bedded in warm ſand, and ſo kept gently ſtirred by means of glaſs, or wooden ſpatulas, until they ceaſe to emit their invaluable vapours as ſmoke; which has been proved by many accurate experiments not merely to contain the vivifying oxygenic principle ſo neceſſary to animation, but alſo the means of correcting or diminiſhing the force and power of malign infection: therefore thoſe vapours are diſcharged be-

ſupply of unſaturated air, until the entire of the moiſture can be licked up, and ſo by the air's current, carried off. This agency the air-ports ſupply, but not ſo, the completely timbered, encloſed, or ſubaqueous decks; therefore the impropriety of moiſture, where the air's free circulation is not admitted.

tween all the decks, but more abundantly in thoſe parts of the ſhip moſt crowded, and wherever diſeaſe has appeared.

The windſails are kept ſet when there is ſufficient air-breezes to keep them full, otherwiſe they are uſeleſs; but then the air-machines have the effect (being worked by men) of forcing currents of air through the entire ſhip, at once ſupplying the neceſſary element, and carrying off, through the funnel-decked air tubes, the hatchways, and every other aperture, all the tainted, azotic, or lethal fluid: theſe, together with the frequent ſcraping and dry-rubbing the decks, are the matters in general uſe, whilſt the men are on board and lodged below; but the more perfectly to purify the veſſel, when her decks and hold can be cleared, the method purſued, after unlumbering, waſhing, ſcraping, and cleanſing the ſhip, is, to diſcharge ſmall cannon, or ſwivel guns, in the hold and between decks, not only for the purpoſe of beſtowing the wholeſome and elaſtic vapours of the gunpowder to the ſurrounding atmoſphere, but further, by the powerful concuſſion created in the guns diſcharge, to diſlodge the ſleeping, poiſonous fluid from its latent receſſes: then follows the burning of charcoal and brimſtone, further corrective of mephitic taint, and deſtructive of every ſpecies of vermin (the hatches being kept cloſe and covered with

with the tarpaulins for the given time), afterwards the complete white-washing, with quick lime, terminates the temporary purification: but perpetual cleanliness, above all, is recommended, and apportioning its most airy parts to the diseased; an attention to the cleanliness of the sailor's habitation is most essential, and prohibiting their sleeping in cupboard-like births, ever favouring the stagnation of air, and the collection of filth and vermin; consequently establishing the seeds of disease. Attending to these general ideas, and to the purification or correction of the putrid taint in water, so easily and cheaply effected, together with the allotting a due number of subjects to the accommodating spaces* (which by no means should be governed

* Should it not be understood what is meant by accommodating persons with a given quantity of space, I beg to state what occurred to me in the last year at Portsmouth, in two troop-carrying ships—viz.

The Monmouth.

		Ft.	In.	
Height between decks	Abaft —	7	10	350½ tons.
	Midships —	7	11	
	Forward —	8	4	
	Average —	8	0	

	Ft.	In.
Space for cabins, between decks, length —	60	0
Ditto ditto average breadth	24	6

Contains 1470 superficial feet, and 11760 cubic feet, of aërial space.

The

verned by the ſhip's tonnage), bid fair to prevent diſeaſe on ſhip-board.

The Hope.

		Ft.	In.	
Height between decks -	Abaft	5	2	353 tons.
	Midſhips	5	2½	
	Forward	5	5	
	Average	5	3	

	Ft.	In.
Space for cabins, between decks, length —	56	0
Ditto ditto average breadth	24	6

Contains 1372 ſuperficial feet, and 7302 cubic feet, of aërial ſpace.

Thus it appeared, that, although the *Hope* was, by the uſual mode of two tons to every man, to carry *one* more than the *Monmouth*, yet ſhe was inferior to the *Monmouth* in point of juſt accommodation, in the proportion of *forty-one* to *ſixty-ſeven*; hence the neceſſity of what is above ſuggeſted is clearly evident, and I can ſafely add, that the ſame may be adjuſted with eaſe and accuracy in every ſuch ſhip, by the formation of a proper ſcale.

FINIS.